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ABSTRACT

In 1996, 49% of students in grades 6-12 participated in community service: 26% participated in community service on a regular basis, and 23% participated once or twice during the school year. Students in grades 6-12 were more likely to participate in community service if an adult in their household also did so: 32% of students living in a household with an adult participant in community service participated themselves compared to only 19% living in a household with no adult participating. Students who were involved in student government, other school activities, nonschool activities, or paid employment were more likely to participate in community service than were students who were not involved in any of these activities. Rates of student participation in community service were highest in schools that did not just require community service but also arranged it. Participation rates in schools that both required and arranged community service were similar to the rates in schools that arranged community service but did not require it. Parents' highest education level was also related to students' participation in community service. (MN)

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Community Service Participation of Students in Grades 6-12
Indicator of the Month

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INDICATOR OF THE MONTH

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

Community service participation of students in grades 6–12

April 1999

One objective of the National Education Goals is that all students be involved in activities that promote and demonstrate good citizenship and community service. Participating in community service may reduce the feeling of alienation from society that adolescents often experience and may have a positive effect on students' grades and school attendance. Student participation in service activities also benefits the community by providing scarce resources for various service projects. Data on student participation in community service activities may help school administrators assess their current community service requirements and help them find ways to integrate community service activities into the curriculum.

- In 1996, about half (49 percent) of students in grades 6–12 participated in community service: 26 percent participated on a regular basis, and 23 percent participated once or twice during the school year.
- Students in grades 6–12 were more likely to participate in community service if an adult in the household also did so. For example, 32 percent of students who lived in a household with an adult who participated in community service participated regularly, compared to 19 percent of students in a household with an adult who did not participate.
- Students who were involved in student government, other school activities, non-school activities, or who worked for pay were more likely to participate in community service than students who were not involved in these activities.
- Student participation rates in schools that only arranged community service were higher than student participation rates in schools that only required community service. Participation rates in schools that both required and arranged community service were similar to the rates in schools that only arranged community service.

Percentage of students in grades 6–12 who participated or planned to participate in community service, by selected student characteristics: 1996

Student characteristics	Participated in community service[1]			Will participate before the end of the school year[2]	Plan to do community service next year
	Total	Regular participation	One or two times		
Total	**49.1**	**25.6**	**23.4**	**31.1**	**80.5**
Grade level					
6–8	47.4	23.0	24.4	34.1	84.4
9–10	45.4	23.6	21.8	34.5	82.9
11–12	56.1	32.4	23.7	22.3	71.1
Parents' highest education level					
Less than high school diploma	33.8	15.4	18.4	43.5	78.8
High school diploma or GED	42.1	22.3	19.8	35.5	76.5
Some college/vocational/technical	48.4	25.4	23.0	30.5	79.4
Bachelor's degree	58.0	29.2	28.7	25.7	83.5
Graduate/professional school	64.3	35.2	29.1	21.6	88.2
Any adult in the household who performs community service					
Yes	57.5	31.7	25.8	28.4	86.4
No	39.4	18.7	20.8	34.2	73.7

[1] Data were collected from January 2, 1996 through April 13, 1996. Any student who reported participating in at least one activity more than twice during the school year was classified as a regular participant. Students may have participated in multiple activities without being classified as regular participants if no individual activity was performed more than twice.

[2] Only students who had performed no community service by the time of the interview were asked if they had plans to participate. The percentages were calculated based on students in school in grades 6–12, not just those who participated or planned to participate in community service.

NOTE: Ungraded students or children who were home schooled were not included in this analysis. Details may not add to totals due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Household Education Survey (NHES), 1996 (Youth Civic Involvement Component).

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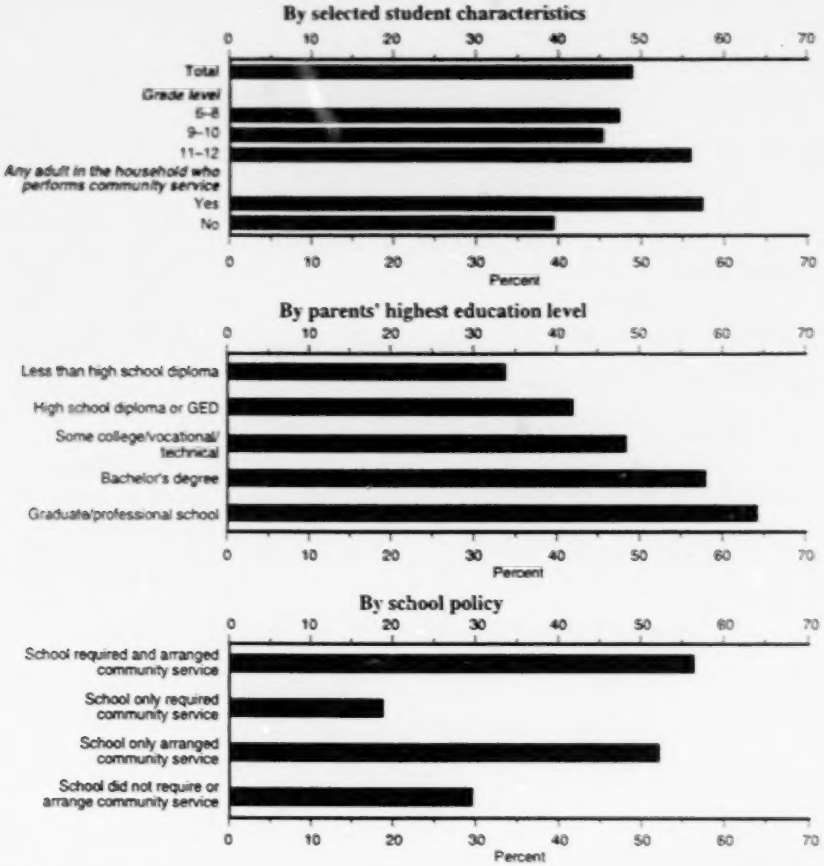
Percentage of students in grades 6–12 who participated in community service: 1996



NOTE: Includes students in school in grades 6–12, not just those who participated or planned to participate in community service. For schools that required students to participate in community service, students must have completed the community service before graduation.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Household Education Survey (NHES), 1996 (Youth Civic Involvement Component).

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